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Draft report

Addendum

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Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 (item 4 (b))

Section 8. Legal affairs

1. At its 33rd and 34th meetings, on 24 June 1999, the Committee considered section 8, Legal affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001.[1]

2. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the budget section and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the budget section.

Discussion

3. Members expressed support for the programme and expressed appreciation for the approach used in the preparation of the overview of the programme budget fascicle for legal affairs, which provided a succinct and clear summary of the subprogrammes and the required resources.

4. It was stressed that particular attention should be given to the study, teaching, dissemination and wider appreciation of international law and that an adequate level of resources should be allocated to that end, in accordance with paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 52/152 of 15 December 1997. In that connection it was noted that, while the use of electronic media for the dissemination of materials on international law was commendable, account must be taken of the needs of developing countries which might not have easy access to such media. A view was expressed that emphasis should be placed upon the continued issuance of printed materials, which should be disseminated widely. It was also emphasized that efforts should be made to ensure that publications of the Office

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of Legal Affairs were not limited to the English language and that they were made available in other languages of the United Nations.

5. Emphasis was also placed upon the fellowship programmes under subprogrammes 3 and 4. It was also stressed that such programmes should be strengthened.

6. Appreciation was expressed for the actions undertaken by the Office of Legal Affairs to reduce the backlog in the publication of the United Nations *Treaty Series* and to expedite the preparation and publication of *Supplements* to the *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs*.

7. It was noted that the Office of Legal Affairs provided legal services to other offices of the Organization with respect to work that might have legal implications for the Organization and in that connection it was noted that the Office had the responsibility for protecting the legal integrity of the United Nations.

8. Views were expressed indicating appreciation for the inclusion of the paragraphs on expected accomplishments. However, it was pointed out that in some cases there was no clear distinction between accomplishments, activities and targets. It was observed that expected accomplishments should be formulated in a way that would facilitate the measurement of the subsequent degree of attainment. It was also pointed out that the formulation of expected accomplishments was not feasible for some of the activities implemented by the Office of Legal Affairs.

9. The exclusion from the Committee's agenda of work of section 7, International Court of Justice, of the programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001 was noted. The view was expressed that the requirements detailed by the International Court in paragraphs 38 to 43 of its report[2] submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 52/161 of 15 December 1997 should have been included in section 7 of the programme budget. Reference was made to paragraph 127 of the report of the Committee on its thirty-first session[3] and it was recalled that since that time the proposed programme budget for the International Court of Justice had not been included for consideration by the Committee. A view was expressed that only the Committee itself had the authority to determine what items ought to be included in its agenda. In that connection it was pointed out that the Committee, at its organizational session in March 1999, had approved the inclusion of section 7 in its agenda.

Conclusion and recommendation

10. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 8, Legal affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001.

Notes

[1] A/54/6 (Sect. 8).

[2] A/53/326.

[3] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 16* (A/46/16).